NATIONAL THEATER 2000 - 2004

Construction of the Theatre National de Wallonie-Bruxelles boulevard Jacqmain in Brussels.



Site

Between the Emile Jacqmain Boulevard 103/109 and the rue St Pierre on the â€œÃ®lot des Journauxâ€ •1000 Brussels

Client

BBC for the CommunautÃ© FranÃ§aise de Belgique

Other architects

L'atelier Gigogne sc, L'Escaut

Structural engineer

ELLYPS

Services engineer

VK Engeenering

Contractor

Entreprise Louis de Waele

Acoustics

CAPRI acoustique

Budget

20 000 000 EUR htva

Scenography

Changement Ã Vue - M. Fayet, J. Dubreuil

Scenography and architectural design

Atelier d'Urbanisme et d'Architecture V. Fabre, J. Perrottet

Movie

http://www.archiurbain.be/?p=3794

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Marc Detiffe - Renaud Callebaut

The National Theatre is like an isthmus, circumspectly nestled into tight inner-city fabric, poised between the frantic pace of the boulevard (main entrances, ticket offices, entrÃ©e des artistes,etc...) and the more tranquil one of the quiet back street where all services are organized. It offers the passers-by a shimmering veil of undulating opalescent glass, transforming itself under fluctuating light and changing reflections, delicately resonating with surrounding urban vibrations. Through the veil of its faÃ§ade, shadows of the theater's carefully proportioned features appear, chiselled with precision: the long and dense brief called for a Â« grande salle Â», a Â« petite salle Â», and a multi-purpose rehearsal hall. The foyer meanders languidly between these functions, designed as continuous open space connecting street level and rooftops ... front and back sides.

The large main theater hall, variable in size and shape with a seating capacity of 752, allows for varied scenographies thanks in part to its proscenium which can extend in several directions. It is equipped with : a 25 m x 13 m stage, a 20 x 5 m backstage, and a 13 m x 7,5 m lateral stage, the presence of the three allowing for varied scenographies. Left and right are two alternating lateral galleries, accessible to the public, and 2 lateral gangways for technicians only. The latter two are compounded by 2 more transverse gangways connecting to the other 5 levels of technicians' gangways as well as to the grills and faux grills of the stage and backstage.

Entering the main hall the ambiance is one of cryptic darkness, the dense blackness of the materials adding to the effect. But with each new scenography, the spectator is instantly plunged into a novel light-induced mood.

The smaller m hall boasts 250 seats spread out on the 2nd and 3rd levels. Its 13,5 m x 8,5 m stage opens onto a fore-stage of 10 m x 7 m and on into an intimate but welcoming hall wrapped with curved, wood-panelled walls. These panels continue throughout (under the transverse and the production's gangways) thereby creating a coherent and independent universe, voluntarily NOT like the main hall's.

The rehearsal hall of matching dimensions with the main hall is positioned exactly above its model. A clearance height of 10 meters allows pre-assembly of all types of sets, even large-scale. Because its neutrality is often the perfect backdrop for certain scenogrophies, this space is, on occasion, opened to a public of up to 150 people.

These three halls and auxiliary functions essential to the expression of all types of performing arts are articulated around a compact core of vertical circulation : set stock, all reserves, carpentry workshops, sound studio, electrical workshops, personnel parking, dressing rooms, premises for stage managers, stagehands, electricians, as well as costume workshop with its laundry room.

All functions and activities merge and connect with generous flights of stairs flowing throughout ... the boundary-less foyer encompassing the harnessed energy with fluid ease.